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Advocate of Peace.

VOL. LXXII.

BOSTON, MARCH, 1910.

No. 3

THE AMERICAN PEACE SOCIETY,

PUBLISHERS,

31 BEACON STREET, BOSTON, MASS.

Cable Address, "Peace, Boston."

MONTHLY, ONE DOLLAR PER YEAR. TEN CENTS PER COPY

Entered at the Boston Post Office as Second Class Matter.

Make all checks payable to the American Peace Society. To personal checks on Western and Southern banks add ten cents for collecting.

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Baneful Prophecies of War.

We are having just now the usual crop of prophecies of war to which we are treated annually when the navy bill is under consideration at Washington. Our war folks are entitled to be considered double first cousins to their like in Great Britain who were recently, during the Parliamentary election, working the German scare for all that their fertile and unbridled imaginations could make of it.

Washington's birthday seems to have been taken advantage of by some of these war mongers to stir up excitement and thus promote, if possible, a greater army and a bigger navy. Hon. Leslie M. Shaw, ex-Secretary of the Treasury, said at Morristown, N. J., on the 22d of February, or is reported to have said, that "war between the United States and Japan is inevitable." Gen. J. Franklin Bell, in advocating, at New Haven, a larger military establishment, is reported to have predicted another war "within thirty years," just because we have had one that often in the past! Gen. Francis Greene, speaking on February 23 before the members of the Canadian Club at St. Catharine's, Ontario, declared that "the prospect of

war between Japan and the United States is a great deal more likely than official circles in the United States are willing to admit."

The mischief of these groundless predictions is that they tend to revive to some extent the jingo spirit in Japan, and that they make it more difficult to prevent extravagant military and naval appropriations at Washington. That was evidently their purpose, conscious or unconscious. But that they will have any very serious effect is not probable. War, at least, they will not bring any nearer than it was before. The "official circles in the United States" do not believe that there is any risk of war with Japan, and they have the best of means of knowing the real spirit of Japan. Official circles in Japan are just as assured that there will be no war between the two countries. Every wind that blows from the Orient brings us word that Japan is our unfaltering friend. The winds that blow from our shores to hers waft back the word that the American people, as a whole, are thoroughly loyal to the historic friendship between the two peoples, and that the pessimistic speeches of a few military and naval men—a very few—have no appreciable effect upon public sentiment.

There is one encouraging phase of the situation. These predictions of war are much less numerous than they were a year or two ago. Some of the noisiest of the war prophets have in considerable measure hushed up, having been unable, after four or five years of eloquent and frantic effort, to bring on the conflict which they were so sure was about to burst upon our western shore. Mr. Shaw and Generals Bell and Greene ought also to cease to prophesy. If they possessed a fair share of the best sort of modern patriotism, they would hesitate long before letting go reproachful words, the mischief of which, when directed against a brave and sensitive people, it is not easy to foretell. They ought to know that no war is inevitable in our time unless it is made so by injustice, falsehood and insolence. If the United States ever again fights another people, it will be, ninety-nine chances to one, because the dragons' teeth sown by such speeches as those which we have cited, have sprung up into armed men across the sea.

The New England Peace Congress.

Arrangements for the Arbitration and Peace Congress for New England which is to meet at Hartford, Connecticut, May 8-11, are progressing rapidly. Dr.

Henry Wade Rogers, Dean of the Yale Law School and former president of Northwestern University, has accepted the presidency of the Congress.

The general committee for the promotion of the interests of the Congress is already large, and growing. Many of the foremost men of New England have accepted places on it. The list includes most of the United States Senators from the New England States, governors and ex-governors, presidents of universities and colleges, presidents of boards of trade, judges, clergymen, educators, etc.

The list of speakers is not yet complete, but we can give assurance that those who will address the Congress will be among the strongest men and women in the peace movement. Among them will be Hon. John W. Foster, ex-Secretary of State, Hon. Richard Bartholdt, President of the Interparliamentary Union Group in Congress, Judge Simeon E. Baldwin, former Chief-Justice of the Supreme Court of Connecticut, Bishop MacVicar, Justice David J. Brewer, Dr. James Brown Scott, Hon. Samuel W. McCall, Herbert Knox Smith, Mr. Samuel Gompers, etc. Others expected are Professor John Bassett Moore, Dean George W. Kirchwey, Dr. E. E. Brown, National Commissioner of Education, etc. There is more than an even chance that Baron d'Estournelles de Constant from Paris and Rev. Walter Walsh from Scotland will be present, as they are expected in this country at that time. It is hoped also that some of the diplomatic representatives of other nations at Washington will be able to get away from their official duties and attend the Congress, as they have been invited to do.

The afternoon and evening which will be spent at New Britain, twelve miles from Hartford, will be a most interesting feature of the Congress. This will probably take the form of an automobile pilgrimage to New Britain, with a reception and demonstration by the school children, a visit to the grave of Elihu Burritt, followed by a supper, and afterwards a mass meeting in the Opera House with speaking by prominent members of the Congress.

We shall hope to be able to publish in our April issue a fairly complete program of the proceedings.

It is important that the largest possible number of the friends of peace from all over New England should arrange to attend the sessions of the Congress. Arrangements have been made for reduced rates on the railways, on the certificate plan.

The Anglo-German Deadlock.

There are some evidences that Great Britain and Germany are beginning to try better to understand each other, or, at any rate, that certain sections of the people and of the public men on both sides of the North Sea are beginning seriously to grapple with the situation. There does not seem, however, to be any appreciation in

either country, except among the pacifists, of the deadly mischief which the naval rivalry between them is producing, nor of the fact that there can be no thorough and lasting change of attitude so long as this rivalry goes forward.

Speaking at the dinner of the German colony in London on January 28, the Emperor's birthday, Count Metternich, the German Ambassador, gave utterance in a luminous way to certain elemental commercial truths, the understanding of which ought to convince every Englishman and every German that commercial jealousy and hostility between the two countries is worse than folly. He said, as reported in the British papers:

"With national unity accomplished there is for us no thought of further war in order to attain national aims. This is known to every one in Germany, and we here know it too. Nevertheless it is not superfluous that this truth, which to us Germans seems a matter of course, should be 'stated,' for there are people who assert that we are only awaiting the opportunity to fall upon any weaker power. To such hallucinations of timorous souls it is not easy to reply. The mind that can conceive them is not open to reasonable argument. Our conscience, however, is clear. We can point to the fact that Germany has kept the peace for nearly forty years, and for more than half that period under the rule of his majesty the Emperor. Could the same be said of all the other great powers? We have not succumbed to the temptation to use our might.

"Every nation, however, and more especially one which is developing rapidly, as Germany is, has aspirations which vary in the course of its evolution. We must depend to a large extent upon export trade, and in order to secure this trade we must seek commercial relations abroad and try to preserve those already made. This is the real meaning of that frequently misunderstood expression 'Weltpolitik.' Our policy of commerce is directed towards the peaceable acquisition of new markets. The weapons with which this policy of conquest is carried out are intellectual industry, skill and knowledge.

"As a matter of fact, no markets can be gained by brute force. You cannot compel any one to do business with you at the point of a bayonet if he has neither inclination nor money to do so. Doing business, selling or exchanging goods, presupposes willingness in both parties. This refers equally to the home as to the foreign market. The political boundaries have lost much of their significance through the increase of the facilities of trading. No civilized country can nowadays shut itself off from the rest of the world without injury to itself. The policy of peaceful conquest of trade has the advantage that it does not act in a spirit of exclusion. I have never believed that among the commercial and industrial nations in their modern conception the destruction of one of two rivals could mean advantage to the other. Let us suppose that one of two such rivals should succeed in suppressing the commerce and industry of the other. What would be the result? Simply that the victor would no longer be able to sell anything to the vanquished, and thus he himself would have destroyed a good customer.

"Commercial rivalry is not to be conceived as if international trading could be represented by a trader sitting